

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 204738
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY:NEA/ARN:WNHOWELL:PDW
APPROVED BY:NEA:MDRAPER
IO:PSBRIDGES (DRAFT)
S/S-O:TMARTIN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 204738

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 6 LINE 6 INCOMPLETE)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, MILI, SY, LE, IS

SUBJECT: LEBANON: NEA TALKS WITH TUEINI AUGUST 9

REF: (A) STATE 202052 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 203291,
(C) STATE 202292

1. LEBANESE UN PERMREP TUEINI CALLED AFTERNOON AUGUST 9
ON ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY VELIOTES. ALSO PRESENT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 204738

WERE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DRAPER, BRIDGES (IO/UNP)
AND HOWELL (NEA/ARN).

2. HOUR AND ONE-HALF CONVERSATION RANGED BROADLY OVER
DANGEROUS LEBANESE SITUATION IN TERMS LARGELY REFLECTIVE
OF RECENT CABLE TRAFFIC, INCLUDING USUN REPORTS OF
LEONARD-TUEINI TALKS. BY COMMON AGREEMENT, DISCUSSION

BEGAN WITH SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WHERE LEBANESE ARMY BATTALION REMAINS STUCK AT KAWKABA. TUEINI SAID EVERYONE, U.S., UN AND MOST PROMINENTLY GOL, IS TRAPPED TOGETHER BY INABILITY OF UNIT TO MOVE. HE SAID CREDIBILITY ALL AROUND IS AT STAKE AND THAT U.S. FULLY AWARE OF DETAILS OF HOW HADDAD HAD BEEN MANEUVERED TO THWART THIS FAR THIS SIMPLE OPERATION. TUEINI MENTIONED IN THIS CONNECTION PROBLEMS WITHIN GOL RE PARA 3B OF SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO BOUTROS. DRAPER EXPLAINED INTENTION OF PHRASEOLOGY WAS

TO DEVISE MEANS OF PUTTING HADDAD ISSUE ASIDE FOR PRESENT IN ORDER TO GET LAF ELEMENTS TO TIBNIN AND NOT RPT NOT TO IMPLY LATER GOL COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATE QUESTION WITH ISRAEL. HE URGED THAT GOL ACCEPT SECRETARY'S FORMULATION IN ORDER TO GET THINGS MOVING IN THE SOUTH.

3. TUEINI SAID HE HAD NOT DECIDED YET WHETHER ISRAELIS ARE PLAYING "INNOCENT GAME" WITH MILITIAS OR WHETHER THEIR ACTIONS REFLECT STRATEGIC DECISION WHEREBY THEY COULD HAVE DE FACTO "CLIENT STATE" IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY THEIR CONTINUED PRESENCE THERE. HE SAID GOL WANTED TO MINIMIZE HADDAD ISSUE AS A QUESTION IN NATIONAL POLITICS AND TEST ISRAEL'S REAL INTENTIONS. TUEINI EXPRESSED CONVICTION THAT LEBANESE ARMY WILL RECEIVE WARM WELCOME FROM INDIGENOUS POPULATION ONCE IT REACHES SOUTHERN LEBANON.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 204738

4. VELIOTES REPLIED THAT HE DOUBTED THE ISRAELIS HAVE A MASTER PLAN THEY ARE FOLLOWING IN THE SOUTH. HE SAID THERE IS SOME INDICATION THAT LOCAL ISRAELI COMMANDERS IN EFFECT HAVE BEEN MAKING MANY OF THE POLICY DECISIONS. NO ONE, HE CONTINUED, BELIEVES HADDAD COULD CONTEMPLATE LONG-TERM DEFIANCE OF THE GOL WITHOUT CONTINUED ISRAELI SUPPLIES. RATHER, HE FELT PERHAPS ISRAELI ACTIONS HAD BEEN BUILT AROUND CONCERN THAT THE MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY INTO THE SOUTH WAS DESIGNED TO FORCE A NEAR-TERM CHANGE IN RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE MARONITE MILITIAS AND THE "GOOD FENCE." IT IS POSSIBLE, HE ADDED, THAT THESE CONCERNS HAD BLOSSOMED INTO THE SYRIAN CONSPIRACY THEORY OF THE ARMY DEPLOYMENT SOUTHWARD THAT AT LEAST SOME ISRAELIS APPEAR TO BELIEVE. THIS, VELIOTES CONCLUDED, IS THE SITUATION WITH WHICH AMBASSADOR LEWIS MUST DEAL IN TEL AVIV. HE ASSURED TUEINI THAT THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, BOTH IN THE SOUTH AND AROUND BEIRUT, AND IS FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY. TUEINI SAID HE FELT IT IMPORTANT THAT HE REPORT PRESIDENT CARTER'S INVOLVEMENT TO THE GOL.

5. TUEINI STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVING LEBANESE FORCES TO TIBNIN, POINTING OUT THAT THE OPERATION HAD IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CONFIDENCE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOL. IF THE DEPLOYMENT TO THE SOUTH FAILS, HE WARNED, IT WILL ENCOURAGE THE BELIEF IN LEBANON THAT NO SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE ON MAJOR ISSUES, SUCH AS PATCHING UP THE COUNTRY, RESOLVING THE CRISIS IN BEIRUT, ETC. FAILURE WILL ALSO REAR ITS HEAD WHEN THE TIME COMES TO RENEW UNIFIL IN SEPTEMBER AND, MOST IMPORTANT, THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH WILL REMAIN FROZEN WITH THE MILITIAS OCCUPYING A DE FACTO STATE OF THEIR OWN WITH

ISRAELI SUPPORT--IN EFFECT, A FURTHER PARTITION OF LEBANON.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 204738

6. ASSUMING A BREAKTHROUGH IS ACHIEVED IN THE SOUTH, TUEINI INQUIRED WHAT COULD BE DONE REGARDING THE LARGER PROBLEM IN BEIRUT? DRAPER EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE ARRIVAL OF THE ARMY AT TIBNIN WOULD MAKE IT EASIER TO DEAL WITH THE SYRIANS ON A PRAGMATIC RESOLUTION OF THE CONFRONTATION IN THE BEIRUT AREA. WHAT IS NEEDED, HE CONCLUDED, IS A FACE-SAVING WAY OUT OF THE BEIRUT CONFLICT FOR THE SYRIANS. TUEINI CONCURRED AND OBSERVED THAT HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SYRIANS HAD BEGUN TO COMPREHEND THEIR NEED FOR A GRACEFUL WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT IMPASSE. HE EXPRESSED, HOWEVER, DOUBTS ABOUT KHADDAM'S UNDERSTANDING OR HELPFULNESS.

7. DRAPER REMARKED THAT ASSAD, HOWEVER, IS A REALIST AND NOT RPT NOT AN IDEOLOGUE. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ONCE THE LEBANESE ARMY ESTABLISHES ITSELF EVEN SYMBOLICALLY IN TIBNIN, HE WILL BE RECEPTIVE TO SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE IN THE NORTH. TUEINI STATED HIS VIEW THAT THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN MANY IMAGINE. HE SAID THE SHELLING, NO MATTER WHAT THE PROVOCATION, CHANGES THE CHARACTER OF THE SYRIAN PEACEKEEPING ROLE AND MAKES PEACEKEEPING IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE. TUEINI SAID HE GENUINELY DID NOT KNOW WHAT SYRIAN INTENTIONS AND OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON ARE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. HAS A CLEAR IDEA? DRAPER AND VELIOTES REPLIED THAT THIS REMAINS AN UNCLEAR AREA BUT AGREED THAT A MAJOR DECISION WAS NEEDED IN DAMASCUS TO BREAK THE DEADLY EMBRACE IN WHICH THE SYRIANS AND MARONITE MILITIAS FOUND THEMSELVES IN AND AROUND BEIRUT.

8. TUEINI SAID THE INFLUENCE OF THE ISRAELIS WAS ALSO NEEDED TO BRING THE FIGHTING ON THE PART OF THE MILITIAS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 204738

TO AN END. WHETHER THEY REALIZE IT OR NOT, HE NOTED, THE SYRIANS ARE NOW THE OBJECTIVE ALLIES OF THE MARONITE MILITIAS. THEIR RESPONSE TO PROVOCATIONS HAD TURNED THE CHRISTIAN POPULATION, MANY OF WHOM HAVE NO REASON TO LOVE THE MILITIAS, INTO SUPPORTERS OF THE MILITIAS. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE SYRIANS, AND PARTICULARLY ASSAD, UNDERSTOOD THIS POINT. IT WAS AGREED THAT ASSAD PROBABLY DOES NOT. THEN, TUEINI SAID, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SOMEONE PERSONALLY CREDIBLE TO ASSAD TELL HIM. HE SAID THE LEBANESE-SYRIAN DIALOGUE ALONE IS NO LONGER SUFFICIENT AND OFFERED THE VIEW THAT THE AMERICANS ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED NOT ONLY TO TALK FRANKLY AND CREDIBLY WITH

ASSAD BUT TO ALLAY CHRISTIAN FEARS AND ENABLE THEM TO CALL OFF THE ISRAELI CONNECTION WHICH FURTHER COMPLICATES THE PROBLEMS OF LEBANON. CHRISTOPHER

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